THE CURIO FIEND

By KENNETT HARRIS.

It was crudely observed by Hollister's friends that his apartments looked like a junk shop. This was not an accurate description, for you will hardly find rare old Chinese and Indian ivories, Japanese bronzes of ancient dynasties, Roman and Egyptian signets and the rarest and most bizarre of old pottery in such profusion in junk shops, though such things are to be discovered there occasionally. In the fond hope of such treasure trove Hollister spent much of his leisure time in junk shops and such places, to the neglect of his social obligations, for he was a collector to the point of mania, though a comparatively young man—not much over thirty—and it has been observed that there are few collectors under fifty years of age.

At thirty a man usually has the more ordinary interests of love, friendship, money-making and so on. It is only, as a rule, when these are outworn, or missed by some decree of fate, that he becomes seriously and earnestly a lover of curios. Yet, though Hollister was young, fairly well off, in good health, not ill-looking for a man, and unembittered by any experience, he was as ardent and absorbed in his curio gathering as any withered and jaundiced old connoisseur that ever delved in rubbish for mistaid trophies of art.

Of course the people who were interested in him would remonstrate with him concerning his passion. Elderly friends of his family would tell him that he ought to have some more serious object in life than the accumulation of trash. Younger men friends, who considered him odd, but a devilish good fellow, tried to lure him into their particular parks of pleasure, but he laughed at them all. Especially he laughed when Binney, whose cards had been out about a month, earnestly recommended him to marry and settle down.

"I know that you are perfectly sincere, old man," he said. "You think it's all right, naturally. But do you think that any domestic bliss could approach what I get out of all this? Every little thing my eyes rest on as I sit here is a joy. If it isn't a thing of beauty, it's something just as good, and its presence is the reward of a triumph. It doesn't worry me or bore me. If I want feminine conversation and feminine society I can go out and get it. I can generally get enough in a very little while to last me a very long time. Imagine a woman in here! Look at that Venetian vase. That's all the woman I want. If I had never done anything else in my life but rescue that from obscurity and destruction, I should merit the eternal gratitude of posterity. Binney, that vase is more to me than your wife is to you."

"Oh, you're a fool!" said Binney, in tones of deep disgust.

But the vase really was a treasure. Of Venetian glass, it represented the first temptation. An Eve, half embracing the trunk of the Tree of Knowledge, whose foliage enclosed the cup, stretched one rounded arm upward to the pendant fruit, while the serpent, twined among the branches, regarded her with malign satisfaction. The exquisitely formed nude body of the woman radiated delicate pink tints through its semi-transparency so that it seemed to glow with life and warmth, and the gleaming bronze-gold of her hair, the dainty grace of her pose, the iridescent glitter of the serpent's scales—the entire form, expression, colors and composition made such a whole as only a poet, artist and master craftsman could have produced, and that as the crowning work of a lifetime.

"To every man upon this earth Death cometh, soon or late." So does the woman who exercises some sort of a powerful influence over his life. She came to Hollister in a brass shop in the Ghetto, where he was bargaining with the proprietress for a candlestick that he did not want to cover his

"Why, this is Mr. Hollister, isn't it?"

anxiety over an ancient ewer from Nuremburg that he did want very much. He had just concluded his purchase to his entire satisfaction when a woman's voice said, in a sweet tone of surprise, "Why, this is Mr. Hollister, isn't it?"

He turned and recognized Miss Mary Barth, a young society woman of his acquaintance, whom he had met a score of times before without noticing particularly. Now, however, probably because of the unexpectedness of the meeting in the odd surroundings, he regarded her with a mild interest, and it struck him that she was unusually pretty and graceful and had a smile that would have made her seem pretty even if her features had been nothing to boast of. She was with a party of three or four friends who were touring the Ghetto, she explained, and she herself wished to buy a Russian samovar. She introduced Hollister to the party with an air of triumph. "He is a collector and knows everything about brass and china and things of that sort," she said; "every stamp and date and name you can 'imagine.'"

"That spoils this place for me," thought Hollister with some resentment, as the proprietress gave a start of surprise and looked at him keenly. But he made himself agreeable, nevertheless, and helped with the purchases. And when, at parting, Miss Barth reminded him that he owed her mother

She stretched out her hand to take it.

a call that was almost past due, and gave him a slight, friendly pressure of her little hand, he felt—well, he did not know exactly how he did feel.

But he made the call, and he found the young lady so bright and lively, and the people so generally pleasant, that he soon made another, and then another. Then he gave a little theater party and supper, and Mrs. Barth and Miss Barth were among his guests, not long after which he was invited to dinner and found a callow youth named Symes, who, by the way, was rather attentive to Miss Mary, one of the most disgusting specimens of humanity he had ever encountered.

As his women friends had been very few, it was quite natural that he should think of Miss Barth more or less. He had, to tell the truth, rather analyzed her. She was amiable, though with a pretty spirit of her own. Clever in many ways and well read. He liked to talk with her, for she was sympathetic and had the rare and precious gift of a sense of humor. Yes, he liked her better, perhaps, than any girl he had ever met—but—and that was a serious matter—she had absolutely no appreciation of china beyond mere prettiness, and she was shockingly indifferent to intaglios and ivories and bronzes.

"No," he said to himself, "it would never do—never in the world."

But it showed that at least he had considered it.

Nevertheless he continued his visits, and his liking for her did not diminish. Once or twice he found the man named Symes there, and on those occasions he went away feeling vaguely depressed. At last he invited Mrs. Barth and her daughter to inspect his curios, and they came.

It would be hard to say just how many times Hollister was chilled and disappointed by the girl's attitude toward his treasures. On the other hand, it may be said, it would be hard to say how often he experienced different emotions altogether. But he had kept back until the last the Venetian vase. He banked on that.

"Now come over here," he said. "If you don't like this——!" and he showed it to her.

Genuine admiration sparkled in her eye. "Oh!" she gasped. "That *is* lovely!"

She stretched out her hand to take it, in much the attitude of the Eve, and in that instant her foot slipped on the rug that covered the polished floor. There was a slight crash, a musical jingle and the vase lay shattered in a thousand fragments.

For the smallest possible space of time Hollister's face changed. Then in perfectly even tones he said, as she involuntarily stooped, "Take care! The glass might cut you." Then he added, meeting her dismayed look with a reassuring smile, "It's nothing. It was a pretty thing, but I've lots of pretty things, though I really don't believe you think so. Please don't feel badly about it or I shall be sorry indeed."

Two days later Hollister was in the Barth parlor, and Mary came to him, holding out her hands impulsively and with actual tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Hollister!" she cried, "I want to tell you. That vase—I saw Mr. Binney yesterday and he told me that he believed it was dearer to you than anything you had. And I broke it! And you were so kind and good about it! I can't begin to tell you how I feel. I——"

He took her hands in his and drew her gently toward him. "Let me tell you something," he said in a voice that shook slightly. "It was a thing I cared for—perhaps as Binney said. But when it smashed I give you my word I did not feel a pang. Do you know why that was?"

She was rosy red and her bosom rose and fell quickly. "No," she replied.

"It was because I knew then what was the dearest thing on earth to me—what made everything seem small and trivial in comparison. You are all I care for in the world, darling. Can you care for me?"

And the look that she gave him then was answer enough.

ALL FROGS GOOD TO EAT.

As Much Enjoyed by the Small Boy as by the Epicure.

The demand for frogs is great. It has increased with the years until now at almost every banquet of importance the dainty is on the menu. All of the larger dining places use from six to ten dozens per day. Of these creatures, which, according to a scientific paper, are waiting to be classified by law as to whether they are fish or animals—just as woman had to wait for centuries to find out whether or not they had souls—there seems to be no especial variety for eating. They are caught anywhere, and, as a small boy said: "All frogs are good to eat if they are not toads."

Boys and girls with nets much like those used in catching butterflies, only much stronger, can be seen making for the small streams and ponds that spot the fields about San Francisco. The average small boy is an expert in catching, killing and dressing the palatable creatures. It is no unusual sight to see away off in the field from around which a few sturdy young sons of America are busy preparing a feast. They broil the tender, white flesh, which they sprinkle with salt and baste with a bit of butter, carried perhaps in a cinnamon can in a pocket along with fish-hooks, keys, marbles and string. The frogs may not be served on silver shells; they may be garnished only with a spray of fresh watercress, but I wager they are enjoyed as much by the youngsters, who are their own chefs and waiters, as a similar dish otherwise cooked and served would be by grown-up bewhiskered epicures.

WHERE HISTORY IS SILENT.

But Small Boy Was Naturally Eager for Information.

The old story of a mother who, when she feared her boy was lost, recalled all his virtues, but on his being restored to her immediately punished him soundly for running away, is repeated with rather a different ending by the New York Evening Post:

He was but four years old and was allowed to play on the streets with other tots who were as yet too young to go to school. His mother would frequently go to the front window to see what he was doing.

One day when she went to the window he was nowhere in sight. She waited there quite a while, but he did not appear. Again and again she went to the window, but could get no glimpse of him. She was becoming alarmed when he returned.

He seemed to be proud of having run away, but with the pride there was also an expression of anxiety, not to say fear. He did not know what sort of a reception he was likely to get.

His mother sternly asked him where he had been. "Be careful, now, and don't lie to me," she said.

The boy's face brightened. "Mamma," said he, "did George Washington ever tell a lie?"

"No," was the reply, "and don't you tell me one."

The boy's face still shone. "Mamma," he continued, "did George Washington's mamma whip him when he didn't tell a lie?"

Will Preserve Historic Tavern.

The New York board of estimate has finally authorized the purchase of old Fraunce's tavern, where Washington took farewell of his officers after the close of the war of independence. The cost of the building and the property to be purchased is $340,000. It is intended to restore the building as nearly as possible to its original condition. Along the walls of the so-called "long room" used by Washington and his generals will be hung the portraits of the revolutionary generals. The other rooms of the building will be used as a museum. About the tavern, on the land which will be purchased, will be lawns and trees, in contrast to the surrounding high buildings. On the lawn in front of the tavern are to be some old revolutionary cannon, and the guards will wear Continental uniforms. Various classes of school children, who are making a study of "Old New York," will be taken by their instructors to the tavern to see the relics and be taught the history with which they are connected.

Cybele and Her Children.

The Mother has eternal youth,
Yet in the fading of the year,
For sake of what must fade, in ruth
She wears a crown of oak-leaves sear.

By whistling woods, by naked rocks,
That long have lost the summer's heat,
She calls the wild unfolded flocks,
And points them to their shelter meet.

In her deep bosom sink they all;
The hunter and the prey are there;
No ravin-cry, no hunger-call;
These do not fear, and those forbear.

The winding serpent watches not;
Unwatched, the field-mouse trembles not;
Weak hyla, quiet in his grot,
So rests, nor changes line or spot.

For food the Mother gives them sleep;
Against the cold she gives them sleep;
To cheat their foes she gives them sleep—
For safety gives them deathlike sleep.

The Mother has eternal youth.
And therefrom, in the wakening year,
Their life revives; and they, in sooth,
Forget their mystic bondage drear!

—Edith M. Thomas.

How We House Our Barred and Buff Rocks in Winter.

From Farmers' Review:—When we began raising fancy poultry like many others we made many mistakes in the construction of our buildings. We arranged the houses to suit the ground instead of convenience for ourselves and comfort for the fowls. Our first house faced the west. Was covered with a shed roof made of boards. The floor was of earth. The roosts were made of strips and hung to the wall with hinges, so as to be raised up out of the way when cleaning out the droppings. But we soon came to grief. A skunk burrowed under but failed to get out before we arrived. A short war followed. "He paid with his life for the keen pleasures of a moment." The moles worked up the floor and the hens by wallowing in the dust made it almost impossible to clean. The roof leaked and the sun only got into the house during the afternoon. Our next building was made with a gable roof. It was twelve feet wide and long enough for three pens. This house faced the south. About two-thirds of the roof sloped to the north, thus giving greater height to the side through which we wished the sunshine to enter. In this we placed a cinder floor. We covered the roof with shingles. Used common boards for siding and lined it with building paper, placing a window two feet square in each pen about a foot from the ground. The fowls did fine in this house. We were never troubled with frosted combs and have found it warm enough for a brooder house during February. The great trouble with this shed was the large space in the gable and the cinders on the floor made it difficult to clean. This season we have erected a four-pen house facing the south, making it five feet high on the north side and eight feet on the south. The siding is common stock boards and the cracks are battoned. The lining is of heavy felt paper. The roof is of shingles. We placed four windows two feet square in the south side. These are about eighteen inches from the floor. We also placed an outside door into each adjoining lot. We sided up the partitions solid for two feet and finished out with lath. A door hung on spring hinges was placed between each pen. The feature of this house was the cement floor. The roosts were small tressels placed over dropping boards, making it easy to clean out and the litter is kept off of the floor. We think this house is a dandy.—A. A. Anderson, Macon County, Illinois.

Feeding for Eggs.

From Farmers' Review:—I would not advise any one that has a good, healthy flock to undertake doctoring them with antidotes with a view of forcing egg production, either summer or winter. On most farms there are plenty of feeds that would go towards making a perfect balanced ration, if we take advantage of it. The secret in making hens lay is simply providing them with suitable feed, and it's a safe way. Corn, wheat, oats, barley and millet seed are good poultry feeds, some do not believe in corn, but their reasons are mostly like the small boy's "because." The Agricultural Experiment Stations tell us that corn is one of the very best feeds for poultry, but they do not tell us to feed it exclusively; still more, cool reasoning would not suggest that we feed it exclusively.

The natural makeup of their feed is a variety; a little of this and that and a constant exercise in procuring it. Some tell us to make them scratch for their feed, a more correct way to say it would be to let them scratch for their feed; they would rather do it than not, besides, it does away with gorging and encouraging a lazy lumix disposition. Corn exclusively, or in fact wheat or millet is too heavy and too rich, something to make bulk must be added. I know of nothing better than wheat bran to balance up a heavy rich feed—it's so common though that it is hardly popular. Bran makes bulk, not only bulk, but it clears the passages and keeps the digestive organs in condition. Bran alone would be too light for an exclusive feed, besides, it would not be in line with nature to feed nothing else. The craw is a grinding mill and we must keep it at work.

The different grains would not be a perfect feed alone; grass, insects and dozens of things we hardly think of, go towards completing the natural wants. Fowls on free range usually find these extra knickknacks, but penned-up fowls or fowls in winter must have their equivalent in some form, or they cannot do the very best. Cut clover or alfalfa hay imitates, cut vegetables imitate and green cut bone helps to make summer out of winter as near as it would be possible. All these things are within our reach and the time required to procure them would return a nice profit, these means will bring eggs, and it's a safe way.—M. M. Johnson, Clay County, Nebraska.

American conditions change imported dairy breeds. It has been frequently remarked that the descendants of Channel Island cattle imported to this country increase in size in a few generations, and that the American Jersey cow is larger than the Jersey cow on her native island.

The first electrical railway was that of Siemens of Berlin in 1879.

Little Australian Butter in England.

We are still increasing our purchases of foreign and colonial dairy produce. The quality of butter received during the five weeks ended August 30 was 453,788 cwts., being an increase of 74,570 cwts. over the corresponding period of last year. Of this quantity 393,632 cwts. came from foreign countries and 60,156 cwts from Canada. Denmark, as usual, was the chief supplier with 171,676 cwts., Russia coming next with 86,819 cwts. During the same period 464,743 cwts. of cheese were imported, being an increase of 116,031 cwts. over last year's figures. Of this quantity Canada supplied 401,795 cwts., and foreign countries 62,948. Of the latter the chief suppliers are Holland, 28,338 cwts., and the United States, 25,395 cwts.

Messrs. Weddel and Co. in their latest market report say: The demand for Canadian butter is somewhat checked by the lower prices at which inferior butters are offered, and which, retailing at a shilling a pound, bring the retailers a greater profit than Canadian. It is true the consumer gets an inferior butter, but that is his fault, for not being willing to pay more than a shilling. In Canada prices are advancing, and the lowest quotations have been left behind. "Choicest" Canadian on the spot makes 96s. to 98s. per cwt. for salt, with 2s. to 3s. more for saltless.

In reply to a cable asking what were the prospects of Australian supplies of butter for the coming season, we have received the following reply: "Butter—there is every prospect of exports being much less than last year." This information agrees with the views of all who are in intimate touch with Australia. When it is remembered that last year the imports from Australia were only 7,449 tons, against 15,556 tons for the previous year, the seriousness of the above cable becomes apparent to every buyer of Australian butter for the coming season.—Dairy World, London, England.

Iowa as a Dairy State.

H. R. Wright, dairy commissioner of Iowa, says: "Iowa is a great dairy state. The creameries of the state annually make about 80,000,000 pounds of butter. The census of 1900 says that we make 61,789,288 pounds of butter on our farms. The same authority says that there is made in the United States 420,954,016 pounds of creamery butter and 1,071,745,127 pounds of butter produced on farms. So that Iowa, with 56,025 square miles of area, produces almost 20 per cent of the creamery butter, and nearly 10 per cent of all the butter made in the United States. The value of our dairy products is about $28,000,000 annually, to which must be added the value of milk and cream consumed as such, and the value of the skimmed milk and other by-products which must aggregate, perhaps $5,000,000 more. All of these figures are very large and naturally are a source of some pride to those engaged or interested in the dairy business. But our pride in this does not increase our bank accounts.

The average number of cows kept by the creamery patron is only seven, and the average butter production per cow is less than 140 pounds. If it is true that it costs $25 per acre to keep a cow it will be seen that there is not an extraordinary profit in the product of the average cow. The profits in dairying would be larger and more certain if the cows were fed and cared for with more attention to proper methods, and the number of cows would be very much greater if the possible profits in dairying were better understood.

The Dry Cow.

From Farmers' Review:—The dry cow that is to be fresh in March or April often has a hard time during winter. She is turned with the yearling or two-year-old steers, and with them gets the run of the corn fields, and at other times receives only corn fodder for her daily ration; or, probably, with her companions she takes her chances at the straw pile. Progressive farmers have learned that corn stalks or wheat straw alone do not give a profitable growth on young stock, nor satisfactory gains on older ones. In fact, they have decided that instead of getting a profit from their rough feed they often lose the profit obtained on last summer's pasture, and all has to be done over again next summer. Surely the dry cow should have our sympathy. True, she may not be turned into money very soon. If steers fail to grow or gain on such food, much less could we expect a dry cow to produce a well-developed calf and feed it well afterwards on such food. Then she is not only expected to feed the little youngster, but to give one-half of her milk to the family. If this supply is given, the cow must be storing a reserve force when dry. If allowed to rough it through she all the while gives away from her own system instead of laying up a surplus for future needs. Clover hay with some corn or bran with corn fodder and timothy hay will be a fairly good ration for the dry cow. Do not feed too sparingly of the bran foods.—W. B. Anderson.

Brahmas were formerly called Brahma Pootras. Much uncertainty exists as to their origin. Some claim that they are a distinct variety brought from North India, while others say they were produced by crossing some other fowls on the Cochins.

National Live Stock Convention.

The National Live Stock convention convened in Kansas City, Jan. 13 to 16. The first session was very slimly attended, not more than a dozen people being in the big theater when the meeting was called to order. President Springer in his annual address said that the stockmen of the United States had four billions of capital and could construct and operate a packing plant of their own if they had to. His remarks were directed against the so-called packers merger.

Secretary Martin, in his annual report, referred to the anti-shoddy bill now before Congress. He declared that the free importation of shoddy makes it possible for the manufacturers of snide clothing to sell a $3.00 suit for $15 to the unsuspecting American purchaser. This bill is asking both for the protection of American wool growers and for the protection of consumers. The tax to be laid on the imported shoddy is only one-tenth of a cent per pound, to enable a suitable inspection to be maintained. However, there is strong opposition to this bill from some of the clothing manufacturing centers.

Senator Harris spoke on the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. W. C. Bailey spoke on the "Angora Goat," in which he referred to the rapid development of the goat industry in this country during the last three years. George F. Thompson read a paper on "Our Markets for Live Stock and Their Products." He said the home market was the one to be looked after the closest. He called attention to our expanding foreign market for beef and other meats, but said that we had powerful competitors in Denmark and some of the other foreign countries. There is great need for American breeding animals in Mexico and Argentina.

A resolution was adopted requesting Congress to so amend the interstate commerce act that the commissioners would have power to enforce their own acts. Another resolution thanked the Department of Agriculture for the vigorous way in which it had stamped out the foot-and-mouth disease. Dr. W. H. Dalrymple read a paper on "Infectious Diseases," after which a resolution was adopted calling for the disinfection of all hides imported into the United States.

William M. Springer, counsel for the association, made a report of the various bills he had helped or opposed in the interests of the stockmen. He declared that the output of oleomargarine in Chicago during the past December was greater than for December of the previous year, and expressed the conviction that the lack of coloring matter would not ultimately result in restricting the sale of that article.

John H. Hobbs sent a paper in which he warned stockmen against diseases like rinderpest coming in from foreign countries. He pointed out the claimed fact that tuberculosis had been imported into this country in 1841 by a Dutch cow, and that the loss in a single year was $8,000,000.

Some of the most important work of the convention was done in the discussion and passage of resolutions. One of these urged the national government to take measures to secure markets for American meats in Manchuria and other parts of Asia. Another urged Congress to clothe the interstate commission with power to enforce its rulings. A third asked Congress to pass a law authorizing railroads to keep cattle in cars for 40 hours without unloading. Yet another favored the bill introduced in Congress for a board from the War Department to stimulate the breeding of horses along improved lines for cavalry service. A strong resolution against the proposed merger of packing plants was passed, and in connection with the same $7,500 was subscribed to further a bill in Congress "to protect trade and commerce against unlawful restraints and combinations." Members of the convention said that should the merger be accomplished they would string packing-houses from "Chicago to San Francisco." Other resolutions adopted were: Indorsing the policy of the Agricultural Department in its efforts to eradicate poisonous plants on the ranges; Indorsing the Tongue pure-food bill now before Congress; asking the Agricultural Department to repeal the forest exclusion order and protesting against the government setting aside tracts of land for game preserves, and asking the transference of the administration of the affairs of the forest reserves to the Department of Agriculture.

Officers elected for the following year are: President, John W. Springer, Denver; Secretary, Chas. F. Martin, Denver; treasurer, Geo. L. Goulding, Denver.—Farmers' Review.

Present Play by Oscar Wilde.

"Salome," by the late Oscar Wilde, was given in Berlin the other afternoon at a matinee before an invited audience, a public representation having been forbidden by the police. It was a tremendous success.

Subsidies of Various Powers.

France gives the largest subsidy to shipping of any power. The total amount, including postal subsidies, is $8,500,000 a year. Japan comes next with about $3,000,000 and then Germany and Russia.

The oat crop and sugar crop have each increased six-fold in fifty years.